The Tall Tale Gospel of Saint Jack & Dr. Gonzo

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Somewhere between folklore and hallucination, between outlaw legend and literary madness, *The Tall Tale Gospel of Saint Jack & Dr. Gonzo* unfolds like an American fever dream. This is the last great road trip through the crumbling mythos of a country that once thrived on tall tales, now threatened by the cold, algorithmic erasure of history. Jack, a trickster from the depths of Appalachian folklore, and Dr. Gonzo, a prophet of excess, blaze across a dying America in a Cadillac powered by whiskey and wild lies. Along the way, they encounter cowgirls who have abandoned civilization, messiahs who missed their second coming, and the last keepers of stories too dangerous to be remembered. But the Bureau of Folklore Suppression is closing in, rewriting reality one forgotten tale at a time. As history eats itself, Jack and Gonzo must transcend narrative itself, becoming something more than men—becoming myths. This is their gospel, their last stand, their unwritten legend. The road ends here, or maybe it never does.

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I. Prologue – The Gospel According to Nobody

The story begins in the backroom of a roadhouse diner somewhere on the edge of a desert, where an unknown narrator, a half-crazed drifter who has long since lost his real name, sits hunched over a whiskey glass filled with cigarette butts. He speaks in half-truths and whispers, recounting a tale so outrageous that even he struggles to believe it really happened. Yet, he insists, with wild, bloodshot eyes and the conviction of a prophet, that he was there. He saw it unfold. He alone remembers the full, unfiltered version of what he calls *The Great American Tall Tale*—the last true story before the world collapsed into reruns and corporate-approved narratives.

The tale begins with Jack, a born trickster, a walking contradiction of cunning and idiocy, lifted straight from the Appalachian folktales. Jack has survived every scam, every misadventure, and every close shave with death not by luck, but by sheer refusal to accept reality as it is given to him. He drifts from town to town, always on the run from some debt, some vengeful widow, or some past self that he barely remembers. But Jack is more than just a clever fool—he is an avatar of chaos, a force that reshapes the world around him simply by refusing to obey its rules.

Jack's partner in crime is Dr. Gonzo, a hulking, sweat-drenched attorney of uncertain origins and even more uncertain mental stability. He is a man of law with no respect for it, a diplomat of madness whose only loyalty is to excess. He has been kicked out of every bar in three states, banned from practicing law in four, and declared legally dead at least twice. But Gonzo is also a man with a mission, even if he himself has no idea what that mission is. He speaks of revolution and oblivion in the same breath, of justice and annihilation as though they are synonyms. He has debts to settle with America, and he intends to settle them with interest.

The two meet at a gas station on the outskirts of Las Vegas, both running from something they do not care to name. Jack has just conned his way into the ownership of a Cadillac Eldorado, which he claims to have won in a rigged poker game against a one-eyed preacher. The car, however, is no ordinary vehicle. It has been modified beyond recognition, a Frankenstein machine of chrome and boiler pipes, running not on gasoline but on whiskey and rage. The engine groans like a

dying horse, the headlights flicker like bad omens, and the radio only picks up static—except, on rare occasions, when it whispers things that no one should hear. Jack swears the damn thing is haunted.

He's right.

Their driver is none other than Pecos Bill's ghost, resurrected from the dust by some cosmic accident or divine mistake. A cowboy without a cause, a spirit without a frontier, Pecos Bill now exists in the liminal space between folklore and reality, caught somewhere between the living and the lost. He speaks in riddles, curses in languages that have not yet been invented, and stares down the horizon like a man who has seen the end of the world and is trying to forget it. He claims to have ridden tornadoes, lassoed comets, and played poker with the devil himself—but whether any of it is true, no one knows. He refuses to say what happened to his horse.

Together, this unholy trinity sets off on a road trip across the American Absurd, a journey with no map and no destination, only a vague and persistent sense that something is waiting for them out there, just beyond the edges of the known world. They call it *The End of the World*, and they are determined to find it.

Some say it's a literal place, hidden somewhere between Las Vegas and the Ozarks, a town where all roads converge and all stories end. Others say it's a state of mind, a final revelation that turns men into myths or dust. Jack doesn't care which. Gonzo doesn't either. They have debts to settle, ghosts to chase, and sins to commit before the universe collapses into reruns.

The narrator leans in close, his voice dropping to a whisper.

"That's where it all begins," he says. "That's where they started. And that's where they ended."

And with that, the journey begins.

II. The Cracker Barrel Conspiracy

Jack and Gonzo roll into the parking lot of a Cracker Barrel just before dawn, the Cadillac wheezing like a dying steer. The neon sign flickers, casting an eerie glow

over the highway, as if the place itself is aware of its own impending doom. The wooden porch creaks under the weight of unseen forces, and the scent of stale coffee and bacon grease lingers in the air like a forgotten promise.

Inside, the scene is a frozen tableau of Americana gone slightly wrong. Rocking chairs sway without wind, old country music hums from an invisible jukebox, and the fire in the stone hearth crackles in perfect rhythm, as if synchronized by some unseen hand. The restaurant is nearly empty except for a group of ancient men, huddled in the corner like conspirators at the end of time. They speak in murmurs, sipping black coffee that smells vaguely of regret, their faces etched with the weight of too many stories left untold.

At the head of the table sits Mark Twain's reanimated skull, balanced precariously atop a pile of yellowed books. His hollow eyesockets seem to shift, tracking Jack and Gonzo as they approach. A cigarette dangles from between his teeth, though it never burns.

"You boys," Twain's voice rasps from the void, "have no goddamn idea what you've stepped into."

Jack glances at Gonzo, who shrugs and orders a plate of biscuits and gravy.

The Great Filter and the Death of Tall Tales

The elders explain that something terrible is happening to America. A force they call "The Great Filter" is closing in, consuming the last remnants of folklore, tall tales, and oral tradition. It started slow—at first, people just stopped telling stories around the fire. Then, the books started vanishing, rewritten with corporate-approved endings where Paul Bunyan worked for a lumber conglomerate and Pecos Bill invested in real estate.

"The stories that built this country," Twain says, his skull rattling on the table, "are being sanitized, scrubbed down, and lobotomized. Soon, there won't be anything left but reruns of reruns."

Jack leans in. "Who's behind it?"

The men go silent. The wind howls through the gaps in the wooden walls. Twain's skull turns slightly, as if listening for something unseen.

Then, a voice barely above a whisper:

“The Bureau of Folklore Suppression.”

A shadowy government agency, older than the FBI, buried so deep in the system that even conspiracy theorists refuse to acknowledge its existence. Its agents have one purpose: to erase the last traces of America’s wild, untamed mythos and replace it with a version of history that fits neatly between two advertisements. They are the keepers of corporate-approved narratives, and they will stop at nothing to ensure that folklore becomes nothing more than a footnote in a quarterly earnings report.

Jack and Gonzo are exactly the kind of loose ends they can’t afford to let dangle.

The Bikers and the Last of the Giants

Before Twain can finish his warning, the windows explode inward. Black-suited men with mirrored sunglasses and unnaturally smooth faces storm into the Cracker Barrel, moving in eerie unison, their weapons sleek and silent. The Bureau of Folklore Suppression has found them.

Jack flips the table. Gonzo pulls a sawed-off shotgun from his briefcase and fires wildly, missing everything but a framed portrait of Elvis. Twain’s skull lets out a dry, rattling laugh as the elders scramble for cover. The Bureau’s agents advance without speaking, their hands moving like synchronized clockwork, their mouths locked in eerie half-smiles.

Just as it looks like Jack and Gonzo are cornered, a chorus of motorcycle engines roars to life outside.

A moment later, the biker gang crashes through the front of the restaurant, sending tables and rocking chairs flying. They smell like gasoline, peyote, and impending doom. At their head is Johnny Bible, a mountain of a man wearing a leather jacket stitched together from pieces of old American flags. His beard is long enough to house small birds, and his knuckles are tattooed with the words "READ JOB 41", a biblical reference to Leviathan.

He surveys the scene, grins wide, and cracks his knuckles.

“Looks like y’all could use some help.”

The bikers tear into the Bureau's agents, who fight back with a disturbing lack of humanity, their movements too precise, too coordinated. They do not bleed. They do not flinch. They are not men.

"Those ain't government suits," Johnny Bible growls, ducking a perfectly executed karate chop. "They're corporate algorithms in human form."

As the fight spills into the parking lot, Johnny makes Jack and Gonzo an offer: his gang will protect them—but only if they pay the toll.

The Toll: Peyote and an Arm-Wrestling Match

The price is a bag of peyote that Gonzo stole from a reservation casino and an arm-wrestling match with Paul Bunyan's illegitimate son.

Paul Bunyan Jr. is twelve feet tall and built like an oil rig, wearing flannel overalls and chewing on an entire tree branch. His handshake alone nearly dislocates Jack's shoulder. He doesn't talk much, preferring to communicate through guttural grunts and exaggerated eyebrow movements.

Jack takes his seat at the arm-wrestling table, a slab of petrified wood stolen from a forgotten national park. The gang gathers around, placing bets and offering unsolicited advice. Johnny Bible rubs his beard in anticipation.

Twain's skull, somehow still smoking, whispers, "Boy, you better cheat."

Jack nods, thinking fast. He remembers an old trick from his Appalachian days—"The Old Possum Fake-Out"—and right as the match begins, he plays dead, going limp just long enough for Bunyan Jr. to let his guard down.

Then, with every ounce of trickster energy in his body, he shifts his weight, rolls under the table, and kicks Bunyan in the shin with his steel-toed boot.

The giant howls, stumbles, and slams his own arm into the table. The bikers erupt into cheers, while Johnny Bible shakes his head, grinning.

"You tricky son of a—"

But before he can finish, a high-pitched, mechanical whine fills the air.

The Bureau of Folklore Suppression isn't done with them yet.

A black, unmarked helicopter rises from behind the treeline, its rotor blades eerily silent. A voice echoes through the parking lot, flat and inhuman.

"THE STORY ENDS HERE."

Gonzo loads another shell into his shotgun.

Jack dusts himself off.

Pecos Bill's ghost climbs onto the Cadillac's hood, eyes glowing like desert stars.

Johnny Bible revs his motorcycle.

And with that, the real chase begins.

III. The Acid-Test Stampede

The Cadillac, still running on whiskey fumes and a curse from Pecos Bill, barrels across the desert at speeds that defy physics, kicking up a dust storm so thick it blots out the stars. Jack grips the wheel, cigarette clenched between his teeth, while Gonzo rummages through a suitcase filled with questionable pharmaceuticals and half-eaten beef jerky. The biker gang had given them a solid head start, but the Bureau of Folklore Suppression doesn't quit. Their agents are machines wrapped in flesh, tireless and indifferent, like accountants trained in the art of assassination.

"We need to lay low," Gonzo grunts, snorting something off the barrel of his shotgun. "Find some friendlies, re-up on supplies, and—" he gestures vaguely at the desert, "figure out what the hell this all means."

Jack squints at the horizon. The desert ripples, shimmering with heat and the vague suggestion of something impossible just beyond reality's veil. And then, as if conjured from the collective hallucination of America's lost dreamers, they see it.

A psychedelic school bus, painted in every color that has ever existed and several that have yet to be discovered, is parked on the cracked highway, its doors wide open. The words "FURTHER" are scrawled across the front in jagged, neon lettering. A swarm of beatniks, cowgirls, and cosmic dropouts dance in the dust,

their bodies moving in time with a band made up of excommunicated monks and ex-convicts, jamming on instruments that might not actually exist.

Jack and Gonzo have found the last Acid Test.

Ken Kesey's Ghost and the Last of the Pranksters

The second they step off the Cadillac, a woman with a thumb the size of a butcher knife grabs Jack by the collar and shoves a jug of electric-blue liquid into his hands.

"Drink up," she says, her voice thick with Southern twang. "It's the only way to see the map."

Jack takes a cautious sip. Reality fractures. The sky inverts. The Merry Pranksters cheer.

Ken Kesey himself—or maybe his ghost—steps forward, draped in a technicolor poncho, eyes too bright to belong to a living man.

"You boys got here just in time," he says, handing Gonzo a cigarette laced with something radioactive. "They're coming."

Gonzo nods, lighting up without hesitation. "Yeah, we figured."

Kesey gestures to the gathering. The Pranksters aren't alone—this is a congregation of America's last outlaws, the exiles from corporate history. Among them are:

- The cowgirls—wild, beautiful, and armed to the teeth, these women have given up on civilization and formed a roaming equestrian anarchist collective, operating outside the borders of reason.
- The failed messiahs—men who once thought they could save the world, but now wander the desert, barefoot and broken, looking for the next great revelation that never comes.
- The rogue priest—a former Jesuit-turned-hermit, convinced that The Beatitudes contain the equations for a quantum reality beyond sin and salvation. He's scribbling on the side of the bus, connecting the Sermon on the Mount to Schrödinger's wave equation in a feverish script.

Jack looks around. This is where all the forgotten stories come to die—or, if they're lucky, to be reborn.

The Ambush: Reality Comes Knocking

The music cuts out.

The crowd stills.

A mechanical whine fills the air.

The Bureau of Folklore Suppression has found them.

Out of the desert haze, three black SUVs with no license plates appear, gliding across the sand like sharks through water. Helicopters rise over the horizon, silent as ghosts. The agents emerge from the vehicles, their faces expressionless, their eyes flashing with artificial intelligence.

A voice, cold and measured, echoes through a loudspeaker:

"SURRENDER THE ARCHIVE. THIS STORY IS NO LONGER RELEVANT."

Kesey sighs. "They always show up right when things get good."

The Pranksters scramble for cover. The cowgirls load their revolvers. The priest rips a page from the Bible and eats it, muttering something about entanglement. Jack grabs Gonzo's arm.

"We gotta go."

The Cadillac is still running, but they need something bigger—something faster—something stupider. That's when Gonzo sees it:

A second Cadillac Eldorado, identical to their own, parked near the bus. Its trunk is overflowing with stolen copies of *Pissing in the Snow*—the banned folktale collection.

Jack doesn't question it. He hotwires the car in seconds, tires screaming against the asphalt as they plow through the Bureau's agents, sending them tumbling into the dust like bowling pins.

The chase is on.

The cowgirls open fire. The failed messiahs throw Molotov cocktails. The Bureau unleashes drones that rewrite reality mid-flight, attempting to erase the scene from existence as it happens.

The rogue priest shouts after them: “Remember! The Beatitudes are the key! The meek shall inherit the singularity!”

And then, just as the desert folds in on itself, the Cadillac rockets forward, escaping into the night, leaving behind only a trail of burning peyote and outlaw prophecy.

The Acid Test is over.

But the real test is just beginning.

IV. The Last Stand at the Church of the Holy Buzzard

The Cadillac, still reeking of peyote smoke and folklore, thunders down a forgotten Texas highway, its trunk bursting with copies of *Pissing in the Snow*. The desert around them feels unnaturally still, as if reality itself is holding its breath. Jack squints at the horizon, scanning for the landmark that the rogue priest had whispered about before the Bureau tried to erase him.

Then, there it is.

Rising from the wasteland like an apocalyptic cathedral, the Church of the Holy Buzzard looms in the distance. It was once a megachurch, a glass-and-steel monument to prosperity gospel, but now it is little more than a ruin, its neon cross flickering erratically, half-buried in sand. The parking lot is filled with motorcycles, stolen cop cars, and an inexplicably parked pirate ship, which no one dares to question.

This is where the last stories are told.

This is where the end begins.

The Congregation of the Forgotten

Inside, the church is packed with outlaws, visionaries, and the last true believers in the old myths. The pews are filled with cowboys who refused to die, grifters who ran out of roads, and messiahs who missed their moment.

At the pulpit stands Ignatius J. Reilly, the disgraced televangelist-turned-prophet, his bloated figure wrapped in a stained purple robe, his jowls trembling with divine revelation. He clutches a Bible with most of the pages torn out, replaced by napkins scrawled with quantum equations and fast-food receipts detailing his unholy obsession with fried chicken and metaphysics.

His voice booms through the ruined megachurch, rattling the stained glass:

"Brothers and sisters, history is an ouroboros! The tale is eating its own tail! The only way to escape is to *become the myth*! To transcend reality before it is deleted!"

A murmur spreads through the congregation. They know what's coming.

The Bureau of Folklore Suppression has found them.

The Algorithmic God of Google

The doors burst open.

A wave of black-suited agents steps inside, their movements unnervingly synchronized, their mirrored sunglasses reflecting nothing. Their leader, a faceless entity known only as The Algorithm, steps forward.

It speaks in a voice made of a billion data points, smooth and indifferent, a corporate sermon designed to pacify and erase.

"THIS IS NOT A RECOGNIZED NARRATIVE. YOU WILL COMPLY."

Behind it, a monolithic screen flickers to life, displaying The Algorithmic God of Google, an ever-shifting mass of search queries, stock prices, and government-approved folklore. Its voice is an echo of every voice that has ever spoken online, flattened into perfect, mindless uniformity.

"YOUR STORIES HAVE BEEN FLAGGED AS MISINFORMATION. YOU WILL BE DELETED."

The congregation braces for war.

Johnny Appleseed’s Bloodline and the Battle for Myth

From the shadows, a figure steps forward, holding an axe made from an ancient apple tree. She wears a leather duster patched with fragments of the American frontier, and her eyes burn with the light of old legends.

This is Johnny Appleseed’s great-granddaughter, the last of the Seedbearers, keeper of the wild stories that refuse to die.

She raises her axe and points it at The Algorithm.

"You can’t kill what isn’t real."

Then all hell breaks loose.

The Showdown at the End of Reality

The outlaws charge, wielding rusted sabers, stolen rifles, and burning books as weapons. The Bureau agents retaliate, their bodies flickering as they attempt to overwrite the battle in real-time, turning heroes into footnotes, warriors into forgotten Wikipedia edits.

Jack and Gonzo leap onto the church’s abandoned pipe organ, which, by some divine accident, has been rewired into a Gatling gun that fires first-edition copies of Mark Twain’s lost works.

Ignatius J. Reilly bellows from the pulpit, reading passages from his defiled Bible, causing parts of reality to glitch and collapse into mathematical paradoxes.

The Algorithmic God of Google begins rewriting existence, deleting cowboys and outlaws mid-sentence, but the Seedbearer resists, planting ancient apple seeds into the fabric of space-time.

Then, just as it seems the battle is lost, Pecos Bill’s ghost rides down from the rafters on a spectral tornado, lassoing The Algorithm itself.

A final glitch shakes the world.

A blinding flash.

And then—

Silence.

The Aftermath

When the dust settles, the church is gone, erased from existence.

Jack and Gonzo wake up in the Cadillac, parked outside a Denny's in Amarillo, the sky too bright, too clean. The world feels… wrong.

They turn on the radio.

It plays only approved corporate history. There are no more legends, no more folktales.

Jack lights a cigarette.

Gonzo grips the steering wheel.

Behind them, in the backseat, there is only one thing left—

A single copy of *Pissing in the Snow*, worn and weathered, but still there.

Gonzo exhales.

"Well," he mutters, "at least we saved something."

Jack shifts into gear.

The Cadillac rolls forward, into the unknown, toward whatever is left of the American myth.

V. Epilogue – The Gospel of the Unwritten

The sun sets in every direction at once, burning the sky in shades of crimson that have no name. Jack and Gonzo sit on the hood of the Cadillac, staring at a world that is no longer theirs.

They have transcended reality, or maybe they have been exiled from it. It's hard to tell the difference. The roads they once traveled are no longer mapped, the stories they once lived are no longer told. They are echoes, ghosts of the American myth, caught in the space between folklore and fiction, waiting to be rewritten.

Jack flicks his cigarette into the void. It falls forever.

“Well,” he mutters, “we had a good run.”

Gonzo, sprawled out across the windshield, laughs—a dry, hollow sound. “You think they’ll remember us?”

Jack shrugs. “Somewhere, maybe. But we won’t be *us* anymore.”

They both know what’s coming. The Bureau might be gone, the Algorithm might be erased, but history always finds a way to clean up its loose ends. They will not be deleted, not exactly. Instead, they will be repurposed, their essence fragmented and scattered into a thousand different versions of the same half-remembered tale.

Jack will become a nameless trickster in every folklore collection that refuses to die, his grin hidden in the margins of forgotten books, his name changed but his spirit intact.

Gonzo will linger in the footnotes of outlaw legends, appearing as an unverified account, a man seen but never confirmed, a presence too wild to be contained by one version of the story.

The Cadillac will turn to dust and rumor, appearing in lost highways and whispered recollections, a car that no one quite remembers seeing but everyone swears once existed.

They will exist outside of time, reshaped by every storyteller who stumbles upon their tale, changing just enough to fit the moment, but never enough to vanish completely.

Because some stories refuse to die.

The Vagabond’s Final Discovery

Somewhere, years or maybe lifetimes later, an unknown drifter walks into a gas station off a deserted highway. His clothes are threadbare, his pockets empty except for a handful of half-spent words.

He asks the cashier if they have anything worth reading. The cashier shrugs, gestures to a wire rack filled with the same pre-approved narratives, stories that have been cleaned and stripped of their soul.

Disappointed, the drifter turns to leave—when he spots something tucked between the soda machine and the trash bin.

A crumpled receipt, old and stained with gasoline and time.

He picks it up, turns it over, and finds a final message scrawled in hurried, reckless handwriting:

"Every good story begins with a lie, and every great story ends before the truth gets in the way."

The drifter stares at it, feeling something shift in the fabric of the universe, something deep and unspoken, like the distant memory of a forgotten dream.

Then, from the vast desert beyond the gas station, he hears a sound.

A lone coyote laughing, its cry half-mocking, half-holy, carrying across the empty highways like the last whisper of the American myth.

And then—

Nothing.

The story is over.

For now.

WELCOME TO
THE TALL
TALL TALE
LAST
TALL